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Note verbale dated 20 July 1999 from the Permanent Mission of Chile
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations Office at Geneva presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to request the admission of Chile as a member of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Chile is a country with a long-standing and recognized tradition of providing asylum in the Latin American region and since the creation of the Office of the High Commissioner it has attached special importance to the universal work carried out by UNHCR for the protection and promotion of the rights of refugees.

In this connection, as a State Member of the United Nations and a party to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, Chile is continuing actively to contribute to these activities, prompted by the concern to ensure full compliance with the principles and objectives of the United Nations resolutions on refugees, as well as the provisions of the above-mentioned international instruments, to which it assigns special significance.

Thus, in keeping with its traditional posture, the Government of Chile, reiterating once again its commitment to respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to implementation of the international conventions on the protection of and provision of assistance to refugees, and to the goal of strengthening international solidarity in the search for durable solutions,

entered into an agreement in January 1999 with UNHCR for the resettlement of refugees in Chile which includes a first project to resettle a group of families from the former Yugoslavia. This project is under way and is due to be completed in the course of 1999.

In this same spirit, the Government of Chile wishes to pursue its cooperation and establish closer links with UNHCR, for which purpose it considers that its membership of the UNHCR Executive Committee would be appropriate and necessary.

Accordingly, the Government of Chile would be most grateful if the Secretary-General of the United Nations would transmit this request to the Economic and Social Council for its consideration.
